

---

## **Glasgow Third Party Sector Engagement Forum**

To be held on **25<sup>th</sup> of October 2017** at **14.00**

Venue **Melisa House**

### **Attendees**

Anne Kinghorn (AK) Serco, David McLean (DM) Serco, Angela Webster (AW) Serco, Zafar Mohammed (ZM) Serco, Priscille Mulhearn (PM) Migrant Help, Lori Sullivan (LS) North Glasgow Integration Network, Sheila Arthur (SA) W/ASH, Esther Muchena (EM) SRC, Owen Fenn (OF) Govan Community Project, Geysa Salih (GS) British Red Cross, Naomi McGookin (NM) British Red Cross

Apologies: Scott Ross, Trish McMonagle, Sarah Zadik, Charles Laughton, Sarah Monroe, Chris Stephen, Norma McKinnon, Cathie MacGhie, Carol Ann Nesbitt, Hanah Jedh

### **Agenda items**

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Agreement of Previous Minutes
3. Matters Arising
4. Round Table updates
5. AOCB
6. Dates of Next Meeting

# Minutes of Meeting

Notes of Meeting	Action by
<p><b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>AK welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were undertaken. DM advised of the apologies received.</p>	
<p><b>2. Agreement of Previous Minutes</b></p> <p>Agreement of insertion/amendment to April Minutes by SA.</p> <p>EM- advised the group of the Pilot regarding the Home Office appointments to assist with benefit claims which has now been rolled out in Glasgow from the 4<sup>th</sup> of October.</p> <p>It was agreed that group will feedback of how this pilot is working</p> <p>AK- advised that she would add task for TM to provide details of the pilot results</p> <p>OF- asked for clarification on the progress of the Freephone number</p> <p>AK- advised that Serco is still waiting for clarification about the most appropriate technical set up.</p> <p>Confirmation that contractually Serco will provide, where applicable, childcare equipment including cots and high chairs but it is helpful if agencies could advise their clients to ask their Housing Officer as and when their child is ready to use one and it can then be delivered to the property.</p> <p>AK confirmed the following in relation to how Serco accesses properties as per the contractual requirements:</p> <p>Serco are contracted to visit all occupied properties within the portfolio at least once per calendar month. The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly, we must ensure the properties are compliant with the contract in terms of the standard of repair, and in addition, we complete a welfare and residency check to ensure the wellbeing of our service users. For standard monthly inspections, all service users are notified in writing of the inspection date each month by means of a fixed notice within the property, indicating the date of each inspection. This notice is subsequently updated each month by the visiting Housing Officer, writing the next date of inspection and effectively giving the service user one months' notice in writing. A Housing Officer will only use keys to access a property where there is no response from the service users after knocking three times on the door. This is then followed by a courteous call to highlight to any occupant that the Housing Officer is about to enter the property. Once within the property, the Housing</p>	<p>All</p> <p>AK to TM</p> <p>AK/SZ</p>

Officer will introduce themselves and sign the visitation log within the property. We have a duty to ensure the property is in a good standard of repair, and if the service user does not make themselves available on the date of inspection, we have no alternative but to check the property in their absence, to ensure there are no defects and no immediate welfare issues for the service users, for example self-harm etc.

In terms of the maintenance staff, there are occasions where defects must be repaired on an emergency basis. On these occasions, we do still attempt to ensure the service user is aware of the timescales for when to expect our maintenance staff, and the Housing Officer would communicate this information in person at the time of reporting the fault, where the service user is present in the property. For routine defects and pre-planned maintenance, where possible, the timescales and completion end date will be noted on the fixed laminate within the property, giving the service user notice of when to expect the maintenance staff will be in attendance.

Please be assured that at no time is it the intention of Serco staff to cause any additional or unnecessary stress to any of our service users, or indeed to invade on anyone's privacy.

The previous minutes were agreed and accepted. Matters arising were also addressed.

### 3. Update around table

**GCP-** OF advised that he had little to update. ESOL classes are running in Cardonald and anyone can access them. The details are on the website.

**NGIN-** LS advised that a joint information event is being held on 10<sup>th</sup> of November by NGIN & EIN in the Nazarene Church in Parkhead. It will be a good networking opportunity and Service Users are being urged to attend to find out information of what is on in the local area. Also looking at holding short series of these events in specific local areas.

**W/ASH-** There was some discussion around the numbers of asylum seekers coming to Glasgow.

AK- advised that numbers can fluctuate on a regular basis.

SA- advised that ASH have received complaints that Housing Officers are not attending as per the notification on the back of the front door. ASH also have received complaints about unskilled repairs people and there not being a good standard of workmanship. SA also advised that 1 person mentioned that a SU has been advised by a housing officer to carry out the repairs themselves. AK requested if possible specific examples could be provided for investigation.

SA



**Migrant Help-** PM advised the group that she had received an email from the Home Office that Aspen cards are going to be rolled out for S98 by December. PM will update at the next meeting. PM also advised that each application being made is coming with a huge amount of paperwork for Migrant Help to undertake.

There was a general discussion on the Application process for S95 & S98

***EM action to draft a paragraph to the Home office regarding process***

EM

**SRC-EM-** wished to highlight the length of time families are in IA and asked if Serco have the ability to move these families on to dispersal accommodation?

**AK-** advised that Serco are bound by the Home Office instruction regarding the ITP process and can only move to dispersal when authorised by UKVI.

**EM-** then asked about a safeguarding issue which affected families with 3-4 children in IA who are unable to send the children to school. EM continued that TM is open to communications and she will email and that she will check for an update on it.

EM

**EM-** Queried the ratio of Singles to families.

**AK-** advised that the split is approximately 60-40 and that Glasgow. However this can change and it is almost impossible to forecast the split.

**EM-** then wished to raise the issue of evictions. People have received letters from Serco about support stopping. There is also a letter from a solicitor about people having to leave the property or court action will be taken. She requested clarification on Serco's implementation on this issue?

**AK-** advised the group that there are around 220 over stayers in Glasgow. The oldest case is from February 2014, totalling 21,307 days and this is not including SUs who have already left after lengthy periods of unsupported occupation in the property. Each situation is being looked at on a case by case basis. Each case has been checked with the Home Office to ensure that there are no further appeals or potential reinstatement and that all avenues have been exhausted via Judicial review. Serco works with SRC and DASS and any other agency to try to get the SU back onto support where applicable. AK suggested that a workshop may be useful to take place with partners. We would be able to look at the pinch points and identify other views or issues that may be relevant in determining how best to collectively support discontinued cases in Glasgow.

# Minutes of Meeting

OF asked if this was mostly related to S4 cases as people fall through the gap at this stage. OF welcomed the idea of a workshop. He advised that on the point of evictions no one is questioning this and that Serco has the right to do so. OF asked for clarification on the process of lock changes?

AK- SR is the only person who can authorise a lock change.

OF- that is great to hear, can we clarify on process of lock change? I am sure SR took legal counsel and that Serco could legally carry out a lock change.

AK clarified that Serco can carry out lock changes due to the occupancy agreement but for the time being Serco will seek to evict through application to the courts in Scotland but it is confirmed again that lock changes to effect move-ons are a legal option.

SA- stated that there has been a case recently of keys being taken from someone and an email would be coming soon about this.

SA

PM- will we discuss specific cases at workshops?

AK- suggested that the focus of the workshop will be on processes and how to work in the best interest of SUs collectively rather than individual cases.

OF- agreed that a workshop on this issue would be helpful

**BRC-** GS advised that 4 new positions have been filled for group case workers, also BRC & Bridges are in partnership and a new charity shop is to open. NM advised that a project was launched last month with Just right Scotland aimed towards destitute people and all asylum cases.

**Serco-** AK advised that she had met with Govan Help this morning and they had requested to join the forum. AK asked the group for their thoughts on this request. AK updated the group on the appointment of 2 x Intensive Support Coordinators, who are here today and that the contact details will be distributed – see the ends of this minute for detail. The new DA manager Katrina Freedman's details will also be distributed. AK also advised that there are a number of new Housing Officers going through training and that new patches are being created. AK also stated that more work is being taken in house with the repairs team. If any work has to be carried out and the SU has any vulnerability then the HO will also attend. AK informed the group the Freephone telephone line is still a WIP. SR has been appointed as the Operations Director for the NW and SNI regions. DR is now the SU Operations Manager and Vincent Gormley is the new Performance and Compliance Manager with recruitment ongoing for a new Compliance officer. AK stated that across the contract there is an increase of resources and associated training being undertaken. AK informed the group that Serco are currently working in collaboration with



# Minutes of Meeting

Refuweege; there is a system in place to identify families or single SUs with little clothes, toys etc. Also dispersal packs from Refuweege that are age and gender specific will be given out to families and singles. Pop up event with Refuweege to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> of November and a number of flyers were distributed to partners. A number of Third Sector and Statutory agencies are coming to Clyde House on a regular monthly basis to advise Housing Officers about their Organisation so that we can work jointly to support SU's. This will continue on an ongoing basis.

DM- nothing new to update

AW/ZM- confirmed to the group that they will both be around to speak with everyone and to find out what they need and how they can help. The HO's will direct the SU to them if there is a specific needs and the Intensive Support coordinators will assist/direct/signpost as appropriate to relevant people and organisations.

Katrina Freedman Dispersal Accommodation manager- [Katrina.freedman@serco.com](mailto:Katrina.freedman@serco.com)

Angela Webster Intensive Support Coordinator- [Angela.Webster@serco.com](mailto:Angela.Webster@serco.com) 0771 446 0002

Zaf Mohammed- Intensive Support Coordinator- [Zafar.mohammed@serco.com](mailto:Zafar.mohammed@serco.com) MOB phone TBC

## 4. AOCB

None

## 5. Dates of next meeting

Will be held in the board room at Melisa House, Brand St at 2pm on 17<sup>th</sup> January. Please note the change of date which clashed with the launch of the New Scots Strategy. Could you please confirm your attendance to David McLean, as it is hoped, as discussed at the last meeting, that we could run the planned Move On Workshop prior to the meeting?

